

# **GNFAC Avalanche Forecast for Fri Dec 23, 2022**

Good morning. This is Ian Hoyer with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Forecast on Friday, December 23rd at 7:00 a.m. This information is sponsored by [Blitz Motorsports and Yamaha](#) and [Montana State Parks](#). This forecast does not apply to operating ski areas.

## Mountain Weather

Overnight, mountain temperatures climbed above 0 F for the first time in 36 hours. There is no new snow and westerly winds are 10-15 mph gusting 25-30 mph. Temperatures today will climb into the high single digits to teens F. Moderate westerly winds will continue. Snowfall will begin mid-day with 2-4" expected in the Bridger Range and 3-6" across the rest of the advisory area by tomorrow morning.

## Snowpack and Avalanche Discussion



### Cooke City

Triggering avalanches 2-4 ft deep in the recent and wind drifted snow remains possible today. More than 20" of snow fell in Cooke City earlier in the week accompanied by strong winds. A number of natural avalanches broke during the storm ([details](#), [details](#)). The storm snow is slowly settling. Look out for shooting cracks as a sign that the new and drifted snow remains unstable. It's been almost two weeks since the last slide broke on deeper weak layers, but even the slight possibility of such a slide should lead you to tone down your terrain ambitions a bit today ([details](#), [details](#)). The avalanche danger is [MODERATE](#).



### Bridger Range   Gallatin Range   Madison Range   Lionhead Range

Avalanches breaking on weak layers low in the snowpack are the primary concern. Weak layers buried 3-4 ft deep are present on most slopes and in many places are capped by a cohesive slab. There hasn't been recent activity on these layers, but our stability tests are showing they still hold the potential to slide ([Hebgen Lake video](#)). Dig and test these layers. If there is any doubt - stay out of avalanche terrain.

Wind drifts of recent snow could also break in somewhat shallower avalanches (but still plenty deep to be a serious concern). Avoid wind drifts entirely or check to make sure they're well bonded before committing to steep terrain. Triggering avalanches remain possible and the avalanche danger is rated [MODERATE](#).

Please share avalanche, snowpack or weather observations via our [website](#), email ([mtavalanche@gmail.com](mailto:mtavalanche@gmail.com)), phone (406-587-6984), or Instagram ([#gnfacobs](#)).



### Island Park

In Island Park, avalanches breaking on weak layers low in the snowpack are the primary concern today. Dig and test these layers. If there is any doubt - stay out of avalanche terrain. Wind drifts of recent snow could also break in somewhat shallower avalanches (but still plenty deep to be a serious concern). Avoid wind drifts entirely or check to make sure they're well bonded before committing to steep terrain.

## Upcoming Avalanche Education and Events

Our education calendar is full of awareness lectures and field courses. Check it out: [Events and Education Calendar](#).

Thursday, December 29, 6:30 p.m., *Avalanche Presentation and Raffle* (great odds of winning!) at MAP Brewing in Bozeman. Free.

January 4 + field day on January 7 or 8, *Avalanche Fundamentals for Snowmobilers*, Information and pre-registration [HERE](#).

January 4 + field day, *Avalanche Fundamentals for Skiers and Snowboarders*, Information and pre-registration [HERE](#).

Every Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. *Avalanche Rescue Training*, drop in for any amount of time. Round Lake Warming Hut, Cooke City. Free.

Please consider donating to the Friends of GNFAC [Annual Fundraiser](#).